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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

SEP 20 '78

Issue #84
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SARAH WEDDINGTON NAMED TO WHITE HOUSE POST.....Sarah Weddington, the Department's General Counsel has been named Special Assistant to the President with responsibility for handling women's issues.

Ms. Weddington is a magna cum laude graduate of McMurray College in Abilene, Texas, and holds a law degree from the University of Texas. She was a two-term member of the Texas House of Representatives before accepting her present position.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.....Following the Supreme Court decision in the Bakke Case, President Carter sent a memorandum to the heads of Government departments and agencies, stating that Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity programs would be continued. In endorsing the President's statement on August 17, Secretary Bergland directed "all managers and supervisors to vigorously develop, implement and enforce affirmative action in your programs and activities". The statements of the President and the Secretary should receive the widest possible distribution. (Contact: James Frazier, OEO, ext. 74256)

TELETYPEWRITER FOR THE DEAF.....OEO has ordered a teletypewriter (TTY) for the deaf for use in the Compliance and Enforcement Division. The TTY can be used with any telephone and will enable employees in OEO to communicate with deaf people calling in on a TTY. Delivery is expected within two months. (Contact: Suzanne Olive, OEO, ext. 76858)

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE SEMINAR.....The Department will conduct a one-day alcohol and drug abuse seminar in Jefferson Auditorium on Wednesday, October 18. The purpose of the program is to provide USDA personnel, as well as other interested government and private sector professionals, an opportunity to identify:

- Social, psychological and physiological effects of alcohol and drugs on humans,
- Problems in administering an alcohol and drug abuse program in an occupational setting and,
- Recovery programs for individuals with alcohol and drug abuse problems.

Dr. Joan Wallace, Assistant Secretary for Administration, will give the opening remarks. The tentative agenda calls for several well-known speakers, including Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm speaking on alcoholism and drug abuse in minority communities, Channel 7 news commentator Paul Berry discussing drugs and alcohol and their effect on the family, and former Congressman Wilbur Mills talking about problems of individual recovery. (Contact: Archie Hunt, OSHM, ext. 73893)

PROPOSED REVISION TO OMB CIRCULAR NO. A-76.....OMB has proposed a revision to OMB Circular No. A-76 which established policies for acquiring commercial or industrial products and services for government use. The revision will provide more definitive A-76 policy guidelines in addition to improving the uniformity of application and strengthening implementation throughout the government.

This revision reaffirms OMB's policy of reliance on the private sector for the goods and services it uses. The language of the circular has been clarified to eliminate misunderstandings that have created problems in the past and, in addition, it provides for an appeals procedure and requires reviews of service contracts of more than \$100,000 to determine if they can be more economically performed in-house.

This proposed revision is in the August 22 issue of the Federal Register. Agency comments should be submitted to the Management Staff by October 1 for inclusion in the Department's position paper. (Contact: Tom Ward, Management Staff, ext. 76111)

FNS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (FMIS).....FNS made an award on August 2 to Touche Ross and Company for the development and implementation of the FMIS. Macro Systems, Inc., will be serving as a subcontractor to Touche Ross and will be providing the technical ADP skills and functions.

A two-stage implementation is scheduled for the FMIS. The support subsystems, which include the Agency's accounting, budgeting and program reporting functions, are scheduled to become operational in April 1980. The second stage (the program subsystems) will build in program evaluation and monitoring functions and is scheduled to become operational in March 1981.

Within these two stages, the contract will be administered in five separate phases. Following the completion of each phase, a full project review, including a formal Go/NoGo decision point, will be conducted to determine if the contractor will be retained on the basis of his performance in the preceding phase. The contractor began work on August 15 and the first phase will be completed in six months. (Contact: LeRoy Konz, FNS, ext. 73990)

BUDGET ITEMS.....

...Second Supplemental Appropriations - The Second Budget Supplemental Appropriations Bill has been passed by both the House and the Senate and is waiting submission to the President. This bill contains appropriations for increased salary costs for the Department.

...Agricultural Appropriations Bill for FY 1979 - Conference action on the FY 1979 Appropriations Bill for Agriculture, Rural Development and related agencies is expected this week.

...FY 1980 Budget - The Program and Budget Review Board has completed a review of Agency requests for the FY 1980 budget. Department allowances have been given to the agencies. USDA requests for FY 1980 are due at OMB on September 15, 1978. (Contact: B. L. Barham, OBP&E, ext. 76176)

EXECUTIVE ORDER 12072 - FEDERAL SPACE MANAGEMENT.....On August 16, the President signed Executive Order 12072, "Federal Space Management," which superseded E.O. 11512. Highlights of the new Executive Order include:

- Requiring that first consideration be given to centralized community business areas when there is a need for Federal space in urban areas (section 1-103)
- Giving consideration to the availability of adequate public transportation, parking, and accessibility to the public (section 1-103(e)).
- Requiring GSA to consider the efficient performance of agency missions and programs, the convenience of the public served and the maintenance and improvement of safe and healthful working conditions for employees (1-203(a)).

The thrust toward locating Federal offices in the central business district will require agencies requesting space outside of the core area to develop more detailed and thorough justification. (Contact: Pete Gagnon, O&F, ext. 75225)

DELEGATED LEASING AUTHORITY - FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION (FmHA).....

As part of a plan to improve its Rural Development program delivery systems, FmHA is increasing the number of District offices from 242 to 292. Approximately 120 of these offices will now be in General Services Administration (GSA) urban areas, where GSA has exclusive leasing authority. The Department has formally requested GSA to delegate the leasing authority to acquire space for these 120 District offices to USDA. (Contact: Pete Gagnon, O&F, ext. 75225)

OMB CIRCULAR NO. A-95 REVIEW.....After many months of study, OMB will attempt to strengthen the A-95 review process in Federal Agencies. (A-95 is the OMB Circular that requires applications for Federal assistance to be reviewed for possible negative State or local impact.) OMB wants to improve implementation of the circular through training and reviews of agency A-95 activities. A kick-off meeting for this effort was held on September 6, 1978. We will keep the Department's agency A-95 coordinators posted on this activity. (Contact: Don Manns, O&F, ext. 77251)

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE.....The Office of Operations and Finance is planning a two-day conference in November to focus on Facilities Management. The conference will center on the needs of journeyman and personnel directly involved in space and facilities management and will be held in the Washington Complex. Proposed agenda items now include:

- GSA policy on location of Federal facilities in the central business district
- Accommodations for the physically handicapped
- Alterations in GSA controlled space
- Direct leasing by GSA
- Improving the Real Property Workshop

Attendees are encouraged to suggest additional conference discussion topics. (Contact: James Wood, O&F, ext. 75225)

CASH MANAGEMENT.....The Accounting Systems and Grants Management Division (AS&GMD) of O&F is beginning a follow-up on the recommendations of the USDA Cash Management Review Phase I Study. FmHA, ASCS, FSQS and the Treasury are considering wider use of Federal depositories for program fund deposits in the field. FNS is considering expanding the use of the Electronic Funds Transfer System (EFTS) for FNS program in several States. This system is now being successfully used for transferring FNS grant funds to the State of California. REA is considering EFTS for loan payment receipt processing. Department cash management regulations are being drafted to implement Treasury's Governmentwide cash management regulations (new Chapter 8000 in the Treasury Fiscal Requirements Manual.) A draft incorporating these applications will be available to USDA agencies for comment within the next three weeks. (Contact: Don Manns, O&F, ext. 77251)